



GOVERNOR'S ADVISORY COUNCIL ON AGING

LEGISLATIVE & POLICY COORDINATING COMMITTEE MEETING MINUTES July 10, 2008

Council Members, Liaisons & Committee Participants Present

Sharon McKinley (Chair), Bill Engler, George Evanoff, Joyce Finkelstein, Paul Herrmann, Marilyn Johnson, Bernadine Hoffman, Doyle Meredith, Bernadette Polley, Lynn Larson, John Linda, Pam Stevenson

Council Members Not Present

Kati Bates

Council Staff Present

Melanie Starns, Cathy De Lisa, Dan Plumhoff, Elsa Gaynor

Guests Present

Dr. Dr. Leon Wachtel and his Dental Assistant, Julie, Mr. Jay Crosby, Mr. Joel Millman, Ms. Annette Quinata

Call to Order, Welcome, Introductions & Approval of Minutes

Committee Chair Sharon McKinley called the meeting to order at 9:43 a.m., and a welcome and introduction period followed. Minutes from the April 3, 2008 meeting were reviewed. *Bill Engler made a motion to approve the minutes as written and Marilyn Johnson seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.*

Updates

FY09 Budget

Executive Director Melanie Starns provided an update of the FY09 state budget, to include a discussion of both the state's FY09 revenue shortfall, as well as the current economic conditions within the state of Arizona. Additionally, Ms. Starns highlighted the Governor's continued commitment to protecting Arizona's vulnerable populations, and she noted that the Governor has worked diligently to ensure that the FY09 budget did not include cuts to independent living and community based services for older adults.

Legislative Session Overview

Ms. Starns provided an overview of the both the budgetary cuts to programs and services that were made during the 2008 Legislative session, and of those programs and services that will remain intact. Additionally, Ms. Starns praised Governor Napolitano, Senate President Bee, Senator O'Halleran, and Representatives Hershberger and Mason for their bi-partisan efforts which ensured that the FY09 budget passed without significant cuts to programs such as Adult

Protective Services, home and community based services, and Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. Furthermore, Ms. Starns stated that \$250,000 in funding for the Lifespan Respite that was cut in FY08 has been restored.

Deputy Director Cathy De Lisa gave an overview of the legislation that was tracked through the Legislation Online Arizona (LOLA) service on the Council's full and short lists, the Governor's final enactment list, and the overall number of bills posted, signed, and vetoed throughout the legislative session. Chair Sharon McKinley thanked Ms. De Lisa for tracking the 2008 legislative session, and for all of the hard work she put forth in order to keep the Council and its constituents informed through her weekly production of an electronic "legislative update." Ms. Pam Stevenson emphasized the need to keep seniors educated on the various bills which passed, and Ms. De Lisa noted that she will continue to produce the legislative update on a monthly basis until the state's next legislative session begins. Copies of the Governor's Advisory Council on Aging's "short" and "full" lists of legislative bills that were tracked through the Arizona Capitol Times, as well as electronic copies of the weekly "legislative updates" are available through the Council office.

Dental Care Presentation

Dr. Leon Wachtel delivered a presentation detailing the mobile dentistry services he provides to frail, homebound seniors, as well as those in assisted living and skilled nursing centers throughout the Prescott area, and an explanation of the equipment that is used in his mobile practice. Dr. Wachtel displayed his portable equipment to the Committee, which consisted of a mobile X-ray unit, dental chair, dental drills and tools, a suction device, and a compressor; and he noted that the overall costs of this mobile set up is under \$10,000 and that the average cost to the patient for his services is roughly \$200 on average. Dr. Wachtel distributed photographs of several patients, in addition to sharing several personal and very compelling stories related to each. Additionally, Dr. Wachtel stated that the following steps are necessary to improve senior dentistry:

- Fight the current rate of tooth decay among seniors by ensuring they receive daily oral cleaning by trained "tooth brushers" among nursing home staff members and caregivers of frail seniors.
- Utilize caregivers, guardians, and mobile care screenings for patients in order to alleviate transportation issues and implement specialized treatment plans that evaluate medical risks among frail seniors
- Deliver the highest quality care that is necessary to maintain proper oral and general health among seniors to reduce the risk of subsequent systemic conditions

Furthermore, Dr. Wachtel stressed the need to address what the Surgeon General's Report has labeled as a "silent epidemic," and he stated that mobile dental programs are desperately needed (Dr. Wachtel currently serves two to three patients per week via the mobile program). A question and answer period followed, and Dr. Wachtel provided a "hands on" example of how his equipment functions. The Committee thanked Dr. Wachtel for a truly inspirational presentation, and commended him for the work he has undertaken. Dr. Wachtel noted he had learned much from the work of Dr. Folse, a Louisiana based dentist whom he recommends that the Committee contact for further information. Ms. De Lisa noted that she has the contact

information for Dr. Folse, an article on oral health and dental care access challenges for seniors, and a copy of South Carolina's mobile dental regulations provided by Dr. Wachtel.

Committee Discussion on Next Steps for Dental Care

Chair Sharon McKinley noted the excellence of Dr. Wachtel's presentation, and she praised his dedication and compassion. Chair McKinley then provided an overview of the past year's dental and transportation related presentations, and she opened the floor for discussion of what the Legislative Policy Coordinating Committee's next steps should be, and a discussion ensued. The Committee discussed and agreed that they will focus on several ballot initiatives coming up during the fall elections, and that providing non-partisan information to educate the senior population on these initiatives should be a Committee priority. Ms. Starns will look into possible presenters to speak on the issues of transportation, pay day loans, and predatory lending at the September 4, 2008 Committee meeting. Additionally, *Marilyn Johnson made a motion to pass the dental care initiative to the Social, Health and Alzheimer's Committee for their consideration as a possible new direction for that committee to pursue, and Bernadette Polley seconded the motion. Motion passed unanimously.*

Other Updates, New Business, & Announcements

- Ms. Starns suggested that the Committee present Dr. Wachtel with an engraved pen and pencil set as a thank you for his wonderful presentation. The Committee unanimously agreed.

Action Items

- Ms. De Lisa will continue to produce the Legislative Update on behalf of the Council in order to track federal legislation, bills enacted during the 2008 legislative session, and upcoming fall 2008 ballot initiatives
- Mr. Doyle Meredith will introduce the Legislative Policy Coordinating Committee's motion to pass their dental care initiative to the Social, Health and Alzheimer's Committee meeting at that committee's July 10, 2008 meeting.
- Ms. Starns will ensure that Dr. Wachtel is presented with an engraved pen and pencil with the gratitude of the Committee.

Adjournment

The meeting was adjourned by Committee Chair Sharon McKinley at 11:27 a.m.

Next Meeting:

The next Legislative and Policy Coordinating Committee meeting will be September 4, 2008 at 9:30 a.m. in the State Executive Tower, Second Floor Conference Room. This is a change in date from previously published calendars. These meetings are open to the public.